



MULTI SYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST)

WHAT IS MULTI SYSTEMIC THERAPY?

An evidence-based program that works with families of youth who are experiencing aggressive behavior (fighting, property destruction, self-harm, running away, unsafe behavior), trouble with the law, drug/alcohol use, school problems, suspension, and expulsion. MST can prevent youth from becoming involved with the law and reduce concerning behaviors. An MST therapist is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. MST recipients typically receive about 10 treatment hours per week for 2-5 months. Evidence shows this intervention is most helpful for youth aged 12-17.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Youth under age 21 with [MaineCare](#) or under age 19 with the [Katie Beckett waiver](#), a mental health diagnosis, and a need for treatment to help with serious behaviors, as mentioned above.

HOW DOES IT HELP?

MST is different for each family based on the needs of the youth and family. Treatment can include individual and family therapy for an agreed upon number of hours. MST can:

- Provide education about your youth's diagnosis
- Complete assessments with your family and youth to determine the most appropriate treatment interventions.
- Help families learn the root cause of concerning behaviors including substance use
- Help build skills that decrease concerning behaviors
- Improve how families interact and build family relationships
- Connect with community (school, church, friends, etc.) to provide a support network to youth and family
- Support youth in building positive peer relationships
- Help youth separate from unhelpful peer groups
- Improve a youth's school or vocational performance
- Connect youth with positive activities
- Reduce need for crisis services

HOW TO ACCESS MST

For more information about MST talk to your targeted case manager or other provider, or visit the [Children's Behavioral Health website](#).

If you do not have [a case manager](#), you may find it helpful to get one. You are also encouraged to call the [CBHS Family Information Specialist](#) and/or a [Family Support Organization](#).

To find out if you are eligible for MST, you or your case manager or provider can make a referral by calling the agency in your area who offers MST. To find a MST agency, click [here](#).



“Now I have all of these skills and tools that I know how to use, because of MST and my counselor. I'm like doing really good in school, like I have high 80s and 90s.”

-Rachael

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